The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers

L'Association canadienne des professeurs de langues secondes

CASLT/ACPLS

FRENCH LANGUAGE WEEK SHOWCASES THE IMPORTANCE OF BILINGUALISM

NEWS RELEASE
For immediate release

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, March 8, 2007 – The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) joins its partners in celebrating French Language Week with *Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie*, March 9th through March 25th, as part of the events which will culminate in the International Francophonie Day on March 20th, an internationally recognized day.

Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, coordinated by *Fondation Dialogue,* promotes the importance of French in our lives. Now in its 9th consecutive year, it offers two weeks of cultural events and activities across Canada.

Each year, CASLT develops and distributes a teacher support document that encourages French teachers and students to participate in French Language Week activities in their schools and communities. The suggested activities include creating word puzzles to learn new French vocabulary, becoming familiar with francophone music and artists, and researching the lives and customs of francophones living in other parts of the world.

The CASLT believes that celebrating the International Francophonie Day and French Language Week provides an important platform for promoting a greater appreciation of the French language to all who are learning the language. Considering recent polls and research that indicates growing support for bilingualism among Canadians, this year's celebrations are even more critical.

A recent CROP poll commissioned by Radio-Canada revealed that 81% of Canadians who were surveyed support the idea of a bilingual country. Similar opinions prevailed in a Decima Research poll this fall, commissioned by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, where 77% of Canadians surveyed indicated supporting increasing available resources for official language learning.

"The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers has always believed in the importance of second-language education in Canada, says President Miles Turnbull. It's encouraging to hear that Canadians identify so strongly with this value. Through education that supports both students and teachers, we hope to witness a continuing increase in positive attitudes towards French language learning across our country. French Language Week is an important date which helps us recognize the central role that the French language plays in our Canadian society and in the world."

Established in 1970, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) increases awareness, appreciation and understanding of the importance of second language learning and teaching throughout Canada and promotes the advancement of professional excellence among language educators. See www.caslt.org for more information.

– 30 –

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